

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE KOREAN WAR

1950

- June 25 North Korean Communist troops invaded South Korea. The UN demanded that North Korea halt the action.
- June 27 President Truman ordered U.S. air and naval forces to help defend South Korea. The UN asked member nations to aid South Korea.
- June 30 Truman ordered U.S. ground troops to South Korea.
- Sept. 8 Allied troops stopped the deepest Communist advance, at the Pusan Perimeter in southeastern South Korea.
- Sept. 15 Allied troops landed behind the enemy lines at Inchon.
- Sept. 26 General MacArthur, commander of UN forces, announced the capture of Seoul, the South Korean capital.
- Oct. 19 The Allies captured Pyongyang, the capital of North Korea.
- Oct. 25 China entered the war on the side of North Korea.
- Nov. 26 The Allies began to retreat after an attack by the Chinese.

1951

- Jan. 4 The Communists occupied Seoul.
- March 14 The Allies reoccupied Seoul after ending their retreat.
- April 11 Truman removed MacArthur and replaced him with General Ridgway.
- July 10 Truce talks began, but fighting continued.

1952

- April 28 Communist negotiators rejected a proposal for voluntary repatriation of prisoners.
- Oct. 8 The truce talks were broken off.

1953

- March 28 The Communists accepted a UN proposal to exchange sick and wounded prisoners.
- April 26 The truce talks were resumed.
- July 27 A truce agreement was signed, and the fighting ended.

commander in chief of the United Nations Command. The command had authority over all the Allies—South Koreans, Americans, and the troops from other UN countries. MacArthur directed Allied operations from his headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. On July 13, Lt. Gen. Walton H. Walker, head of the U.S. Eighth Army, became field commander of the Allied ground forces in Korea.

Units of the U.S. Army 1st Cavalry Division and 25th Infantry Division landed in Korea on July 19 to aid the outnumbered men of the 24th Division. But another city, Taejon, fell to the Communists on July 21.

The Pusan Perimeter. The U.S. 1st Marine Provisional Brigade and the 2nd Infantry Division of the Army arrived in South Korea in late July. But the Allies were forced back to the Pusan Perimeter by August 2. The Pusan Perimeter was a battle line in the southeast corner of South Korea. It extended roughly from the city of Pohang on the southeast coast, west around Taegu, and south and southeast nearly to Pusan. The Nakdong River was the boundary of most of the area.

The fighting at the Pusan Perimeter became a turning point in the war. The North Koreans lost about 58,000 men and much equipment while advancing to the area.



U.S. Army

General Douglas MacArthur, center, led the Inchon landing, a surprise move that turned the tide of war in the Allies' favor in September, 1950. After the landing, he and his aides inspected the area near Inchon and Seoul, above.

The rapid growth of American military strength gave General Walker flexibility in the use of his men. North Korea tried to break through the perimeter by making scattered attacks along it. Walker reacted by using reserves to meet each enemy thrust, keeping his main defense line intact. Overhead, U.S. planes provided air support and fired at the long enemy supply lines. More American tanks and artillery arrived at Pusan to strengthen the defense of the perimeter.

The North Koreans saw that the Allies were gaining military superiority. Desperately, they mounted a major attack and succeeded in crossing the Nakdong River on August 6. But U.S. Marines and Army infantrymen counterattacked and prevented a general breakthrough. The North Koreans advanced to within shelling distance of Taegu, but major losses of men and equipment forced them to pull back on August 25. The Communists attacked the Pusan Perimeter again on September 3. They captured Pohang three days later, but the Allies halted the enemy advance on September 8.

The Inchon Landing was a surprise move that changed the course of the war. On Sept. 15, 1950, marines and soldiers of the U.S. X (10th) Corps sailed from Japan to Inchon, on the northwest coast of South Korea. General MacArthur personally directed the amphibious landing. It required especially careful planning because the tides at Inchon vary more than 30 feet (9 meters). Each boat had to land at high tide because any boat near the shore when the tide dropped would be trapped in mud. The troops who landed at Inchon cut off the North Koreans in the Pusan Perimeter area from those north of Inchon.

Commanded by Maj. Gen. Edward M. Almond, the X Corps moved toward Seoul, 24 miles (39 kilometers) northeast of Inchon. After a bitter battle, MacArthur announced the capture of Seoul on September 26.